



The Anglican Digest

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THE ANGLICAN DIGEST

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TAD is CHANGING

Effective with this issue, THE ANGLICAN DIGEST is setting in motion a return to our roots as "A quarterly [digest of] miscellany reflecting the words and works of the Churches of the Anglican Communion."

Practically, that means we will publish four issues each year on a seasonal basis — spring, summer, fall, and winter. It also means we will be working towards restoring some of the miscellany that has been minimized in recent years: And in All Places, humor, brief notes, From Our Readers, etc. To that end, we would like to share information about items that occur in your parish that would be of interest to the wider Communion. We can only do that as you share them with us; we hope to hear from you. Please write or e-mail.

TAD will continue to work to appeal to the broadest audience with theologically sound and edifying articles while encouraging those in the church to grow in their knowledge and love of Jesus Christ.



Baptism Before Communion

One of the popular trends in our Church is to invite folks who have not been baptized to share in Holy Communion. Although our canons prohibit the practice, more and more churches are apparently willing to ignore the canons in the name of hospitality. Restricting communion to those who have been baptized, they say, excludes guests from the table, which is not what Jesus would have us do.

At first glance, their arguments seem attractive. Requiring baptism before receiving communion looks like a restriction on the sacrament. The Church has gotten itself into trouble time and again by trying to control people by restricting the sacraments. The sacraments belong to God and are given to the people through Jesus Christ. The Church mediates the sacraments only when it acts in its role as the Body of Christ. It's an abuse of Christ's gift if we try to ration the sacraments in an attempt to control a particular political behavior.

And Jesus clearly crossed traditional barriers of exclusion when it came to table fellowship.

He ate with tax collectors and sinners. He also ate with pious Pharisees. While we normally remember the last supper Jesus enjoyed with his closest disciples on the night before he died for us, the same Eucharistic verbs — took, blessed, broke and gave — are also found in the feeding of the five thousand — the radically indiscriminate table fellowship with all comers.

Making guests and visitors feel welcome should be a top priority. And the table does not belong to us; it is the Lord's table. As the hymn says:

*Come, risen Lord
and deign to be our guest;
nay, let us be thy guests;
the feast is thine . . .*

And yet, I worry about the concept of "cheap grace" taught by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, one of the relatively few German Christian clergymen to stand up to Hitler and the Nazis. "Cheap grace" flows from the faulty logic that because it is offered to us unconditionally, grace comes without cost, and since it comes without cost, we can treat it as though it has no value.

He says, "Cheap grace is the grace we bestow on ourselves;

cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate."

On the other hand, he says, Costly grace is the treasure hidden in the field; for the sake of it a man will gladly go and sell all that he has. It is the pearl of great price [for] which the merchant will sell all his goods. It is the uniquely rule of Christ, for whose sake a man will pluck out the eye which causes him to stumble. It is the call of Jesus Christ at which the disciple leaves his nets and follows him."

Coming to communion without making any commitment, without engaging in any discipline, without a call to repentance looks a lot like cheap grace. And cheapens the mystery of communion. Derek Olson puts it this way, "... sacramental theology is the logic and theology of intimacy. Even the metaphors scripture uses for the relationship between God and believers bespeak this intimacy: to abide, to dwell with,

to remain within At the heart of intimacy is commitment. Nothing more — and nothing less. Intimacy is not instant; it grows over time. Intimacy is a process of growing into knowledge, love, and trust gradually — and its gradual nature demands that those growing remain committed to the process and to each other."

And there's one thing more. Baptism requires a sponsor, a person willing to stand with another to bring him or her into the Body of Christ, and the commitment of the gathered faithful who say "we will" when asked to support this person in their new life in Christ. These seem to embody a deeper hospitality than allowing strangers to come and leave again anonymously.

God alone controls God's grace. But a public commitment to repentance is good for us; it is transformational. As Jesus said to Simon the Pharisee, we love much when we recognize we've been forgiven much, and communion should be all about love.

— The Rev. David L. Meginniss,
Christ Church,
Tuscaloosa, Alabama

New Life in Christ: What it Looks Like, What it Demands

The Catholic faith is not simply a collection of doctrines and ideas, or a body of knowledge, or even a system of beliefs, although all those things are important. At its root, Christianity is an experience — a life-changing, personal experience of the risen Jesus Christ. Everything else in the writings of St. Paul, and everything else in our life as Catholics, flows from that personal encounter with Jesus Christ. If we truly seek him, then we will always find him. But when we find him, we need to be ready for the consequences, because nothing about our lives can be the same.

Let me share a story with you to explain what I mean. It's about a young man named Franz who lived about sixty years ago in a small village in Austria. Franz was the illegitimate son of a farmer who later died in World War I. He was a wild teenager. Local people recall that he was the first one in his village to drive a motorcycle. And it's not because he drove safely or kept to the posted speed limits.

Franz was the leader of a gang

that used to fight rival gangs in neighboring towns with knives and chains. He was something of a cad, too, and a womanizer. He got a girl pregnant and was forced to leave town. People said he went to work for awhile in an iron mine.

For reasons nobody knows Franz came back a changed man. He had always gone to church even during his wildest days. But when he returned, he was a serious Catholic, not just a Sunday Catholic. He started making payments to support the child he had fathered out of wedlock. He married a good Catholic woman and settled down to become a good farmer, husband and father, raising three children and serving as a lay leader in his local parish.

I want to quote something Franz wrote in a letter to his godson. He wrote: "I can say from my own experience how painful life often is when one lives as a halfway Christian. It is more like vegetating than living." Believers today are relentlessly tempted to accept a halfway Christianity, to lead a "double life" — to be one person when we're in church or at prayer and somebody different when we're with our friends or family, or at work, or when we talk about politics.

Part of this temptation comes from normal social pressure. We don't want to stand out. We don't want to seem different, so we keep our religious beliefs to ourselves. It's as if we've internalized the old adage: "Never talk about religion or politics in polite company." I've never accepted that kind of thinking, myself. Religion, politics, social justice—these are precisely the things we should be talking about. Nothing else really matters. Few things could be more important than religious faith, which deals with the ultimate meaning of life, and politics, which deals with how we should organize our lives together for justice and the common good.

These are the things we need to talk about if we really want a new life, a whole and undivided life, in Jesus Christ.

— The Most Rev. Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap.,
Archbishop of Denver

*Archbishop Chaput is the author of **Render Unto Caesar: Serving the Nation by Living Our Catholic Beliefs in Political Life**. This article was used by permission and drawn from an excerpt of a speech given by the Archbishop in Edmonton, Alberta on April 30, 2009.]*

Children — Our Inheritance

September — the month of new beginnings for many of our young people. We must embrace them all, for they are taught mainly by our example as adults. They must be made to feel valued and important, for the greatest threat to their security and future comes from the enemy within — in our loss of strong, moral, spiritual, family, and community values and support.

Parent by parent, youth by youth, community by community, church by church, must commit personally to any action that will ensure that our children are valued and loved. Teach and show by example that we should fear God. It is only by our permission that anyone can make us feel inferior.

We must teach our children, by example, not to be lazy, to take care and pride in their work, to be reliable, to get up and do, and not wait around for favours.

Having set goals, they must work quietly and orderly towards achieving them. Children must be encouraged to take the initiative and be persistent as they strive for success in life.

We must teach them not to be afraid of failing, because it is the way we learn to do things right. What matters is not how many times we fall, but how many times we get up. We must always encourage young people to reach up to the limits of their capacities, and always be willing to serve in a positive manner.

The world in which we live is a complex one. We must appreciate the fact that everything is interconnected. Therefore, the crime problem in our country is not just about the rise of a criminal element over the past number of years in the society. It goes deeper than that. The problems of education and discipline in schools, particularly among our secondary students, needs all of us — government, private sector, the church, concerned citizens and parents to play our part.

We must do some hard thinking. We must come up with some solid plan, and act positively to save our children. Many are heading down the wrong road. We must act now. The attraction of the "easy" money of an under-world economy is very inviting.

Our youths must be taught and shown by example that they must

never give up, that life is worth living no matter how hard it gets. Teach them that when they get to their wit's end, when everything seems to be going against them they must hang in with life — hang in for what they believe is right, even if others are going a different way. God lives even at our seemingly impossible wit's end — so be confident, my young friends — you can make a difference! Never give up! Never stop learning and improving your mind. Seek God's guidance.

Something to ponder: The world needs more men and women who do not have a price at which they can be bought; who are not afraid of risk; who are honest in small matters as well as large ones; who are not afraid to go against the grain of popular opinion; and who will be brave and honest enough to admit when they are wrong.

Character, self-discipline, self-determination, the right attitude and genuine service are the substance of life. Children are God's presence, promise, and hope for the human race.

— The Rev. Pam Greaves
Christ Church Parish - Anglican
Trinidad, West Indies

Life and Death

As we move through life's challenges, it is not unusual for any of us to ponder the substance of life after death—in other words, "What kind of life is there after death?"

To begin answering that question, I have to utter four very honest words, "I do not know." I think I am not alone on this one. The Apostle Paul hinted at his own ignorance on this question when he wrote to the Church in Corinth, "*Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known*" (1 Corinthians 13:12).

Now, don't get me wrong; I think we get hints of what rests beyond death's door throughout Holy Scripture. Among them we should include, at the very least, the scene from the Transfiguration where Jesus is visited by what appears to be Moses and Elijah (Matthew 17:1-13; Mark 9:2-13). The visitors are recognized, and even speak with Jesus. When Jesus rises from the grave he appears to Mary Magdalene who first recognizes Jesus' voice, and then his face

(John 20:10ff). He appears to the disciples and even invites the doubting Thomas to touch him (John 20:24ff). Later, Jesus visits with them, eats with them and I can only imagine that he also laughed with them (John 21:12). We are told in Acts that Jesus hung around for about forty days, continuing his work of sharing the Good News of the Kingdom. Read all of Acts!

But then again, remember this risen body was not a resuscitated one — it did not come to life as a result of an injection of adrenaline and a jolt of electricity. It was the power of God that did this one, and so the body that contained Jesus on earth had been transformed in a way that expressed that very power. We still do not see that among us today. So, the question remains, "What kind of life is there after death?" I think that these appearances tell us just a few clear things:

- (1) We will remain who we are. God created us as unique beings, and we will but only die once (Hebrews 9:27). Thus, as Christianity teaches, we will not be "reincarnated." We will move from this

life to the next and continue in God's kingdom.

- (2) Just a theological point here — we do not become angels either (sorry about this, but we don't). Angels (for those of us who believe in them) are heavenly beings created by God to assist God in his work. Humans, we are told, are greater than angels and, by the way, we also are told that sometimes we entertain them without knowing it (Hebrews 13:2).
- (3) There is still much we do not know!

This I do know: It is ultimately a matter of trust. We find that hard these days because we so often want to know the whys and hows about everything. We don't much like mystery anymore. Parker Palmer in his little book, *Let Your Life Speak*, notes this cultural trend, writing, ". . . our culture wants to turn mysteries into puzzles to be explained or problems to be solved because maintaining the illusion that we can 'straighten things out' makes us feel powerful. Yet mysteries never yield to solutions or fixes — and when we pretend that they do, life becomes not only more banal, but also more hopeless." (p. 60)

John Claypool used to say to me all the time, "When my life is over, if there is anything else, it's up to God." That is a powerful statement not only of fact, but of faith. If someone were to have told me in the comfort of my mother's womb that I should jump a ship with 24-hour room service, into a world where I would begin with a slap on the bum — one that included eating, breathing and communicating in another way — I could not at that point understand — I would have said, "No way . . . I am fine just where I am!" Now that I am here, I would never choose to go back to the womb. And Christianity tells us that there is indeed something even greater waiting past the door of death. I wish I had more evidence of what it really is like, but my guess is that when I get there I would never want to come back here.

So, in the end, if there is anything else after death, it is up to God. I believe there is. And knowing God as we do, my guess is that it will be better than we could ever ask or imagine.

— The Rev. Dr. Russell J. Levenson, Jr., St. Martin's, Houston, Texas

First Work

The first work of all Christians is prayer. The context of Christian prayer is Scripture, Sacraments, and Community. The activity of putting Scripture at the core of our lives is our common challenge. It is the means to making our lives more authentic and it is the place where we discover our Lord's invitation to become his disciples. Each generation is called to conversion of life and manners. We can not ride on the accomplishments of previous generations, nor should we want to, if we desire to be truly alive to God.

Without prayer, both common and personal, we become impervious to our own real needs as well as the needs of the whole world. Prayer (simple and direct) is the life line that encourages us and changes our hearts. We are called to prayer, not because we expect to change God and the mysteries of life and living, but in order that we might be changed to a way of thinking and living which is in accord with the will and purposes of God. This means it is not enough to hear the Gospel; we are called

to live into the Gospel. The Gospel is, by nature, meant to be shared. While it is a precious treasure, it is not a possession. It is our baptismal responsibility to share the Gospel, but how can we share it authentically if we do not spend time with it and its community.

At the heart of the Gospel is giving up living just for oneself and learning to live freely as instruments of a wider love for everybody — men, women and children, particularly the poorest of the poor. Jesus came as one who served. Moreover, we have been told that those who are first in the Kingdom of God are those who serve. To follow Jesus involves making the word of God the most important thing in one's life. In order that we do not go off on flights of fancy, it is important that our prayer take place in the midst of a praying community gathered to listen to the Word of God and partake of our Lord's sacramental presence. Prayer in the context of the Church, gathered like the family of disciples gathered around Jesus, is a pathway to becoming familiar with the whole purpose of God. We not only become familiar with the

words of Jesus and his prayer but with the prayers of former generations, like the Psalms of the Hebrew people, and with the needs and concerns of those about us.

If we let it, the Gospel allows us to cross the barriers of race, nation, and culture. It encourages real friendship based on our common inheritance in the Creator. It allows us to see that in Christ Jesus, there is no "Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female." Learning to live into this truth forces us to live in solidarity with each other. The only limits to our service of each other are those of charity. While it might seem much easier to draw into our shells and protect ourselves from the vagaries of this world, we condemn ourselves to a half-life born of isolation. Prayer is not an escape but an entry into reality, the reality of a God who invites the world, and us, into liberation — liberation for all, including the oppressor and the oppressed.

The Very Rev. William
Willoughby III,
St. Paul the Apostle,
Savannah, Georgia

Tough Times . . . Greater Faith

What to do in this time of financial instability:

- Do Not Panic: Our faith is in God, not money.
- Encourage one another: Be a true New Testament church. Do not despair.
- Be wise: Minimize losses, stay out of debt, save instead of spending and be faithful with your tithe.
- Increase your faith practices: Attend church, sing, worship, pray. Give thanks!
- Remember: God knows your situation. He cares. Do not fret. Jesus said, "Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?" (Matthew 6:27). Be at peace. "may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in every way" (2 Thess 3:16).
- And, be benevolent. There are pastors, churches, and folks around you who are struggling much more than some of you. Could you find a way to help them? "They gave to anyone as he had need" (Acts 2:45).

Tough times call for even greater faith . . . but, you know that.

— Newsletter of St. John's,
Charlotte, North Carolina

Time Management for Mission

6. Carry a note card or journal and record every task that needs doing as you think of it.

7. Plan your week with blocks of time for rest, recreation, and fun so you can use your creative energies well during your work.

8. Use a dictaphone and a volunteer typist or secretarial service. You can work anytime an idea strikes; you don't need to be near your computer or have a block of time to sit down and do word processing.

9. Go to a monthly bulletin unless you have a volunteer who will assume weekly responsibility.

10. Do your creative writing whenever the mood strikes. Keep a file of themes and ideas you would like to work on. Keep a file of your written materials so you can use it again appropriately when the well goes dry.

11. Block off in your week the times when etiquette allows you to be visiting; perhaps two evenings a week for visiting, one

morning for hospitals and nursing homes, and one afternoon for visiting seniors. Dealing with people is your primary business and the rest of the week should be shaped around that priority.

12. Get rid of your phone machine that takes messages and instead let people know on your phone message when they can reach you. "I will be at my phone in the office Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm, and Wednesday and Friday mornings from 9:00 am to 11:00 am. If it is a pastoral emergency please feel free to call at my home phone number which is ..." This frees you from the obligation of responding to phone tag all week.

13. Instead of sitting through meetings, drop in to express support and encouragement and to answer questions and concerns. This allows you to connect with many different circles of people in a helpful and uplifting way without burning up time and energy and without interfering with the leadership you've developed.

— The Rt. Rev. Ronald C. Ferris,
previous Bishop
of Algoma, Canada

From the Editor...

The Roots of the Roots: Do Episcopal parishes teach the basics?

When I finished seminary in 1987 I came out with youthful idealism, energy, and too much arrogance, among many other things. I also believed I needed to be unapologetic about teaching and preaching on the most basic questions.

For example, I taught for two years through the Book of Acts. What was the gospel they were proclaiming, I wanted to know. What was their understanding of mission? Who did they think Jesus was? What did they believe about the church?

After three years in the parish where I served my curacy, I left the parish (and the country) to pursue a doctorate. This allowed me the luxury of reflecting on many things, including my three-year curacy. My deepest conclusion: I had failed to be basic enough. I had made too many assumptions. I had used too much Christian vocabulary without defining terms.

The bottom line was that my in-

stinct was right but my implementation left a lot to be desired.

When I asked myself why, my sense was it was partly out of fear. It takes a lot of courage to ask someone to describe the exact nature of the God he or she believes in, to wrestle with the doctrine of Original Sin, to probe the mysteries of the Atonement and the Cross, to delve into the depths of what heaven really is and is not like.

So consider this question: If we look at the parish of which we are a part, and its preaching and teaching, how are we doing in terms of asking and answering the most basic of questions? Are we daring to look at the roots of the roots?

Jesus talked about God and the nature of his kingdom. It is hard to get more basic than that. Can we do any less?

— KSH +

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CALLED TO BE HUMAN: Letters to My Children on Living a Christian Life, by Michael Jinkins, dean and professor of pastoral theology at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

In this manual for living the Christian — and therefore truly human — life, Jinkins explores so-called Big Questions that challenge people of all ages. What is it to be human? Why am I here? What can I believe in? How should I invest my life?

Readers will find here arresting insights illuminating our contemporary human experience. Through these letters written to his own adult children, Jinkins converses with a startling range of thinkers and writers — from Calvin to Rumi — and offers searching, loving testimony to his own faith. In doing so, he is critical not only of “religion” and the church but also of mere vapid “spirituality.” Frank, pungent, and at times humorous, *Called to Be Human* offers vital food for thought and for authentic Christian living.

Item E1140T (softbound, 150 pp, notes, index) \$15



MYSTICAL PRAYER FOR (ALMOST) EVERYONE, by Ernest J. Fiedler who was a priest of the diocese of Kansas City (he died in 2007), theological advisor at Vatican II, and pioneer in establishing the Permanent Diaconate Program in the United States. This book will help ordinary people believe that mystical prayer is a possibility for them.

If it is true, as Karl Rahner said, that we all have “mystical moments,” how can we recognize those moments and develop them into a deeper personal prayer? This brief book aims to correct the assumption that this is a task for extraordinary people and saints.

Presented in a simple format and small enough to be carried around throughout the day, *Mystical Prayer* encourages thought and reflection.

The spiritual seeker will benefit from its unique combination of solid scholarship and plain, down-to-earth style.

Item P071T (softbound, 96 pp, recommended reading) **\$9.95**



THE LIFE WORTH LIVING: Faith in Action, by Byron L. Sherwin, internationally renowned Jewish theologian, ethicist, and scholar of Jewish philosophy and mysticism.

Each of us is confronted in this life with visceral, personal, human questions: Why am I here? What is my life's purpose? For the reflective person of faith, life is an ongoing quest to respond to still further questions: Where is wisdom? What does the Lord require of me? *The Life Worth Living* provides answers to such questions — culled from Byron Sherwin's many years of religious wisdom and experience.

This book will resonate with a wide spectrum of thoughtful readers — believers and seekers alike.

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TO LIVE IS CHRIST: A 40-Day Journey with Saint Paul, compiled by Peter Celano.

Coinciding with the "Year of St Paul," *To Live is Christ* will energize Christians to explore the life and spirituality of the great apostle. This beautiful book illuminates themes from St Paul's life and letters in forty daily reflections and includes:

- A lively approach to history, theology, and Scripture study
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Item L098T (hardbound, 140 pp) **\$17.99**

THE HISTORICAL CHRIST AND THE THEOLOGICAL JESUS, by Dale C. Allison, Jr., Erret M. Grable Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

In this book, which he describes as "my personal testimony of doubt seeking understanding," Dale Allison thoughtfully addresses ongoing

historical-theological questions concerning Jesus Christ. What should we think of the modern quest for the historical Jesus when there is such enduring discord among the experts, and when personal agendas play such a large role in the reconstructions? How much history is in the Gospels, and how much history does Christian theology require of us? What should there be? How does the quest impinge on conventional Christian beliefs, and what might it contribute to contemporary theological reflection?

The Historical Christ and the Theological Jesus is the personal statement of lessons that a respected participant in the quest has learned throughout the course of his academic career.

Item E1139T (softbound, 126 pp, indexes) \$16



THE FORMATION OF CHRISTENDOM, by Christopher Dawson, renowned historian and Christian humanist.

[Christopher] Dawson's book traces the formation of Christian culture from its roots in the Judeo-Christian tradition through the rise and the decline of medieval Christendom. Here, as in all his works, he sees religion as the dynamic element of culture. The Church is, in his view, . . . working as a leaven in history; its role in history is that of healing the divisions of humanity by bringing the nations back into spiritual unity.

"Unequaled as an historian of culture. Unless we read him we are uninformed." — *The Saturday Review of Literature*

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HOWAN'S RULE: The Biography of the Archbishop of Canterbury, by Rupert Shortt, religion editor of the *London Times* Literary Supplement.

"This biography is timely and welcome We can be grateful for work that is strong on empathy, but also balanced and fair in its judgment. The style is eminently readable without ever being trite." — John Austin Baker in *Church Times*

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Becoming Missional

We know that Mission is intentional. We cannot be accidental missionaries. From looking at a great deal of literature, I am convinced that over the next few years we must consider how we are going to be a truly missional community. This will involve an inclusive action plan which will include: Excellence in our traditional parishes, reboots of existing ministry that is under-equipped, fresh expressions of church, new church plants, and vibrant chaplaincies. Whatever it is, we must do everything the very best that we can. One size will not fit all; it never has and it never will. We must be sure that what we offer to God through our ministry in the church is our very best.

We cannot "decide" to be a small parish and to stay that way because it is what makes us feel comfortable. Christ does not call us to be comfortable or to ignore the many people who may live here blocks from our churches but have never heard the message of the gospel.

We have to admit that evangelism is not our greatest gift. I say that because we have at least two situations where we have not

been successful in evangelizing neighbourhoods. We have rented space to other Christian fellowship groups who have gone on to do an amazing job and have quite large, healthy, and vibrant congregations. Instead of thinking of the reasons why we didn't manage it — there is no blame here — let's find out how we could be more successful in the future. Don't get me wrong; I am very pleased that through these other communities people have come to Christ, but I refuse to believe that we can't be just as successful in our mission to make disciples.

Our proclamation is rooted in Christ. There we find the power of life and change. Are we trying to keep Christ locked inside our churches? Paul writes in 2 Cor 5:17: "So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" Do we consider ourselves new creations in Christ?

It is a risky business. I was talking to a young adult who has left the Anglican church. He said he liked the church but he really didn't know what we were about so when he wanted answers and direction, he felt lost. I was sad that he had not

found the people to answer his questions. I invited him to keep talking to me — I don't know if he will take me up on the offer but whether I have the answers or not, I am called by my own baptismal promises to offer to talk.

In order to proclaim the gospel, we need to know the gospel, to study it, to live it — all of it — not just the parts we like the best or the parts that further our plans. We need an incredibly deep understanding of scripture. In fact, we need to wrestle with the scriptures — it is meant to be work.

— The Rt. Rev. Jane Alexander,
Bishop of Edmonton, Canada

.....

Thank You....

Many thanks to the unidentified angel who sent Operation Pass Along a box of books containing several by Thomas Keating, among others.

I Loved You First

Recently my husband and I attended the funeral of a man who had lived out of town. By profession, he was an attorney. By love, he was a husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. The funeral was quite moving — lovely music, full military honors, and especially meaningful scriptural passages. However, the highlight of this exemplary service was the homily given by the priest.

The man whose funeral we attended had been quite active in his church, so he was well known to the rector. The rector had many wonderful stories to share. But the most unforgettable story involved the man, his children, his grandchildren, and his great-grandchildren. Apparently every time this man came into contact with his offspring and the children of his offspring, he would race to say, "I loved you first." As the children grew older it became a kind of game with all of them. The children hurried to detect him before he might discover them so that they could be the initiators of the phrase "I loved you first." It was rare that they could beat him at his own game.

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In the homily, the priest told us a delightful story about the man we knew. It exemplified the presence of this good-hearted person who was revered by his community and will be greatly missed by all — most especially his family. The rector then told several other family tales, and finally he speculated about where the man would be going following his death. The rector suggested that when this man entered the next life, he was most likely to find Jesus Christ, arms outstretched, smiling and welcoming, speaking the exact words of the attorney. Jesus was most likely to say to him, is most likely to say to us, to all mankind — “I loved you first.”

In his book *Humility and Absolute Surrender*, Andrew Murray states that there are two great lessons to be learned in our religious lives. The first lesson is that it is utterly impossible for man to follow Christ and to obtain salvation by man's own accord. This was the bitter lesson that Peter learned on the night of the institution of the Lord's Supper. Never mind Peter's ecstatic experiences with Christ — the occurrence of finding a net full of fish because Jesus had told him

where he might cast it, the salvation from drowning at the hands of his teacher who reached out to him when Peter's faith failed and he began to sink into the water, Peter's presence with Christ at the Transfiguration. Peter had seen it all and yet he, on his own, did not have the courage to profess his faith, even near the hour of the death of the Son of Man.

The second lesson is that what is impossible for man is entirely possible with God. If we are fortunate enough to digest and ingest the first concept, we often end in hopelessness and despair until we accept the second message. To live a religious life is to live every day with the understanding that the impossibilities of man are quite possible with God. God Incarnate came into the world — lived, died, and defied death — impossibilities for man but possible for God. God lived among us. God gave God's self for us. God is there for us ceaselessly, calling each of us to him. God is there for us eternally, beckoning us to move closer, proclaiming always, “I loved you first.”

— The Rev. Deacon Kitty Davis,
St. James,
Wilmington, North Carolina

The Anxious Heart

On the night before he was crucified, Jesus took his disciples to the upper room. It was there he instituted the Lord's Supper and washed his disciples' feet. He also spoke to them about his impending death on the cross.

The disciples were now troubled men. After the euphoria of Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem came the confusing words about imminent betrayal and denial by some of the Twelve. They were dismayed and the trouble in their hearts was only a shadow of the darkness that lurked nearby.

Looking into their eyes and seeing the anguish of their hearts, Jesus said to them, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me" (John 14:1). Jesus' statement was for all who would follow him and his word is good medicine for our hearts living in an age of anxiety.

We are living through one of the worst financial crises in almost a century. There is rising unemployment, anxiety over retirement funds, political corruption, and international crisis.

If that is not bad enough, we have a tendency to borrow trouble, to imagine things to be worse than they are. Imagined fears can be far worse than reality.

Christians are not immune from troubled hearts as we struggle with an imperfect faith. Jesus said to his disciples, "In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going" (John 14:2-4).

An antidote for a troubled heart is to believe that Jesus Christ is preparing an eternal place for us as individuals. We all long for heaven. C.S. Lewis wrote, "There have been times when I think we do not desire heaven, but more often I find myself wondering whether in our heart of hearts we have ever desired anything else. It is the secret signature of each soul, the incommunicable and unappeasable want, the thing we desired before we met our spouses or made our friends."

chose our work, and which we shall still desire on our deathbeds when the mind no longer knows spouse or friend or work."

Thomas did not understand and in verse 5 he asked "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" Jesus responded, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (v.6). Jesus is the way.

In the book of Hebrews we read, "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:2). Jesus is the pioneer of our faith. He did what no human being has ever done. Through the cross he experienced death and was raised from the dead. Jesus conquered sin and death and opened the way for us to approach the throne of grace.

Jesus is the truth of God revealed to the human race. "In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways,

but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word" (Hebrews 1:1-3). Jesus is the God-man who came and dwelt among us.

Jesus is the life. Speaking to Nicodemus, Jesus said, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). To the woman at the well, Jesus said, "Whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (John 4:14). To the crowd of five thousand Jesus said, "For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:40). When we come to believe in Jesus Christ we share in the life of God which death cannot destroy.

The anxious heart needs to remember that Jesus Christ is

everything. He is "the way and the truth and the life." Jesus' encouraging words came just before the Cross. There we find further comfort, not only in its saving power, but in its demonstration of divine love. It is Christ's love that sees us through the difficult times in our lives.

— The Rev. William T. Luley,
St. Luke's, Manchester, Missouri

The Five Marks of Mission

Across the Anglican Church, the Five Marks of Mission sum up, in a widely accepted form, the range of our concerns, to:

- a. Proclaim the good news of the Kingdom.
- b. Teach, baptize and nurture new believers.
- c. Respond to human need by loving service.
- d. Seek to transform the unjust structures of society.
- e. Safeguard the integrity of creation, sustaining and renewing the earth.

— Diocese of Durham, U.K.

About the Cover

Transfiguration of Jesus by Theophanes the Greek is a tempera on wood icon originally painted at the Cathedral of the Transfiguration of the Savior. This cathedral on Red Square in Moscow is a white single-domed church that has stood out against the background of the old town since its construction in the mid-12th century.



Theophanes the Greek (c. 1340 - c. 1410) was a Byzantine Greek artist and one of the premier iconographers of Muscovite Russia. He was teacher or

and mentor to the great Andrei Rublev. Born in Constantinople, Theophanes moved to Novgorod around 1370 and to Moscow in 1395. His style is expressive even while it is almost monochromatic. This icon of the *Transfiguration of Jesus* contrasts the brightness of the Christ figure with the dead Light of Mount Tabor while the symmetry of the heavenly contrasts with the scattered array of the earth-bound disciples.

A Chaplain for Tangier

The congregation (expatriate) is very small, but there are about fifty Africans who love to be blessed! There were lots more, but if they haven't settled here and are still longing for Europe, they are sent home.

This is a really very limited chaplaincy. The church building is in Moorish style unusual for Anglican architecture. A maintenance look over is a good idea. The churchyard (like all!) is ready for a keen gardener. Otherwise try a "clean up" day. A guardian lives in a cottage on site.

The congregation (European) tend to be mobile — there is always someone somewhere else. But as groups go, there is great interest but they are not young and somewhat limited in energy. Forget exciting Alpha courses. Lunches rather than dinners are the normal social contacts.

There is also a considerable African congregation which has probably settled down and set-

tled in. At one time, there was a flood of immigrants hopeful for Europe. Their religious background must be diverse and certainly mysterious. Socially they melt back into the Medina — possibly conduct prayer meetings among themselves in their own languages (a visit of a priest would be helpful).

Morocco of course is Muslim. St. Andrew's flies the flag of St.



George. There is a full history and description in *The Sultan's Gift* by Lance Taylor. There is also a U.K. Consulate which can be very helpful. The capital of course is Rabat. There is a good English library (American staff!) and a reasonable flat for the Chaplain. There are also places of historic interest — Morocco was the first country to recognize the United States. Also, think of St.

Francis, Charles II, Samuel Pepys, Corsairs, European colonization, etc.

Tangier is an excellent place for a year of post-retirement time to tend to that literary masterpiece or a series of superb water colours. It is as on a long retreat, long delayed. But don't misunderstand — there is work to be done.

I had a birthday at Hillspeak in 1966 and seem never to have been forgotten. Now I am 84 and I guess, on my last roundup!

— The Rev. Claude Eric Hampson

[Fr. Hampson is leaving Tangier soon. To make personal contact, e-mail secretary@christophergibbs.com (attention: CE Hampson) or visit the Diocese of Europe at www.europe.anglican.org]

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The Church and the Mission of Christ

One of the things that excited me as a young student was the document from the Second Vatican Council: *Constitution on the Church*. I was refreshed by the notion of the Church being a pilgrim people. We were a people on the way to the end of time and as such we were urged to be open to the needs of the peoples of the world to whom we were sent. It was an outward-looking vision that was open to the need for a transformation of parts of the institution in which the Church of any time found itself operating.

It was the idea that if we were not participating in the ongoing ministry and mission of Jesus as it was being called into being in the world in which we live, then we could not understand ourselves to be living in Christ. The Church was, of necessity, a faith community in mission mode or it was not the Church instituted by Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

This is a theological insight that we need to keep before us. There are two temptations that I see as quite destructive in our Church of today. The first one is to soldier on as if nothing was happening.

"We are alright and if we only keep on doing what we have always been doing, things will come back to the way they were." That is simply not going to happen. The shape of the Church has always been something formed in response to the world in which it was ministering. The shape of the Church has enabled it to better its preaching of the Good News. The world that gave birth to the Church into which I was born has long gone. It has changed and there will be no going back. The Church of the future will be shaped by the world of the present and future. The sooner we appreciate and value that, the sooner our Church will be renewed.

The second belief is that all is well. This is the "ostrich syndrome"; to mention the word "crisis" is to blaspheme. This, of course, is a nonsense. We are in a state of crisis. The real issue is how we go about responding to that crisis. We can sit back and wait and hope it all goes away. We can keep on as we have been, only trying to do it better, or we can see the crisis as a God given summons to renewal and new directions under the Holy Spirit.

It is my belief that the situation in which the Church of today

finds itself in the Western world is a consequence of our fear of believing that the Holy Spirit can lead us in new directions and is shaping the Church for its mission in the world. We are being pruned by God because we struggled to trust that we were being called in new directions. As we struggle to renew ourselves, he is taking the pruning knife to us. What we see in the decline in vocations, the ageing congregations, and our inability to attract people to life in our faith communities are all consequences of our lack of faith.

The world has changed and it is our task to be in the forefront of that change, not running along years behind trying to play catch-up. I was a part of the Ballarat summit not long ago. It was a meeting of so called leading lights and interested people in the City of Ballarat that was called by the Council to address life in Ballarat over the next twenty years. We were given a whole forest of reading material and in not one handout was the word "spirituality" mentioned. There were no mentions of the Church, of God, of faith or religion. It was as if we did not exist in the city. I found that very sad but a good indication of where we stand in

the minds of the leaders and business people of Ballarat.

That should not be so. We are called to be leaven in the city, to be lights to the city and if we are not doing that by the way we minister at the moment, the clear response is to look at new ways of bringing the Good News of the Kingdom alive to those we are called to serve. This does not mean that we abandon the former ways. Not at all. The Archbishop of Canterbury reminds us regularly that what is needed is a "mixed economy." We need to encourage, explore, support, and try out new expressions of Church in our towns and cities. The new alongside the old. Though, to be honest, when we talk about the new expressions, we seem to be really talking about rediscovering some very biblical models of Church. A reading through the New Testament will show a Church that is very much like the models of Church that we find in the *Mission-Shaped Church* material.

So, we should take heart. We are offered this time of crisis as a way of refreshing the Church and we should give thanks to God that he has enough confidence in us to call us to serve in this time

of change and renewal. When we begin to doubt we should group more closely together in prayer and praise, explore the Scriptures more fully together and work harder on living what we are proclaiming. Then God will do the rest.

— The Rt. Rev. Michael Hough,
Bishop of Ballarat, Australia

Why is Heaven Heavenly?

One of the memories that wafts in from my childhood from time to time is watching a *Hallmark Hall of Fame* production of *The Green Pastures*. That would have been in the late 1950s, when I was 10 or 11. *The Green Pastures* was a play telling the story of creation and other biblical accounts. The narrator of these stories was a Black pastor, speaking to Sunday School students. What struck me about it was that heaven was portrayed as a gigantic fish fry, with all the fish, hushpuppies, cornbread, greens, and watermelon one could ever want, along with people to talk with, games to play, and a river to fish in, all on a fine summer day.

Hearing this perspective got me interested in popular ideas of what heaven is like. I have kept my eyes and ears open to various pictures of heaven over the years, as seen in short stories, movies, cartoons, TV commercials, and so on. While the picture of a bountiful, everlasting fish fry is only seen in *The Green Pastures*, what is common in other pictures is the idea of something very enjoyable and pleasant — a setting and activities that the person for whom the picture is being made would find to be highly desirable.

Somehow, in addition to a place of beauty and enjoyment, there are also usually envisioned robes, halos, harps, and sometimes wings. Exactly how these things fit into a place of bliss is seldom spelled out, and I have heard comments by those who say that they have no interest in heaven if it means sitting around on clouds playing an instrument they do not want to listen to on earth.

I am not sure where these pictures of heaven come from. The Bible of course speaks of heaven and hell. However, Scripture does not give us many details, and I suspect that over the centuries various authors and teach-

ers have put in a variety of details to make the concepts of everlasting joy or misery more understandable. However, it seems that the various pictures of heaven that are common have taken on a life of their own and have become detached from the statements of Scripture. It is important to go back to Scripture to see what it says is at the heart of everlasting joy, for Scripture is not the ideas and dreams of human beings but has come from the heart and mind of God so that we might know what is true about him, about us, and about our relationship to him.

Understanding what makes heaven heavenly is important so that we desire it for the right reasons, and so that we can, if needed, explain to someone else why it would be a noble and blessed goal. It is also important for another reason. A few weeks ago, the *Worcester Telegram and Gazette* had an editorial on the narrowness of conservative Christians that was headlined something like "Conservative Christians Condemn Other Faiths to Hell." It went on to say that it was wrong for conservatives to say that those who did not believe as they did would be cast into outer darkness. The edi-

torialist said that he or she was certain that God was merciful and that anyone who was basically decent would be rewarded with heaven.

That editorial writer was trying to be welcoming and inclusive, but he or she wrote out of ignorance as well as out of concern. There are many faiths, such as Buddhism, that have no belief in any kind of heaven. The idea in many eastern religions is that we are all "drops of water" that really belong to a great "ocean" of spirit, and that over many lifetimes, we learn (or not) and grow closer and closer to reentering that vast ocean — eventually losing our individual identity as we finally merge back into the "ocean." The picture given in other faiths is that after death we walk the earth as disembodied spirits. Islam says that those who enter paradise will be rewarded with 70 virgins — I have wondered what Muslim women have to look forward to. Some faiths have no idea of an afterlife. If heaven is open to people of all faiths, then what is heaven like? Who is the god who prepares heaven? What are the criteria for being granted entrance into heaven?

As we look at the Bible to see what it says about heaven, one thing quickly becomes clear — the focus of heaven is God. In Isaiah 6, the prophet is lifted in a vision to the throne room of God, where the Lord is worshiped continuously by myriads of angels, calling to one another, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory." (We join this song at every communion service in the *Sanctus*.) In the last book of the Bible, The Revelation, John is lifted up into heaven, and he also sees a great throne room, with Jesus Christ seated on the throne. Not only are angels gathered in worship, but so are the saints, all of God's people. They surround the throne and continuously praise the Lord Jesus.

In 2 Cor 5:8, Paul notes that to be "absent from the body" means that those who believe in Jesus are welcomed into his presence after dying. To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. When Jesus speaks of paradise in the story of Dives and Lazarus, he pictures the beggar Lazarus as being "in Abraham's bosom," which is a picture of fellowship and intimacy. Jesus also pictures the selfish rich man as

being in a pit of fire, tormented and miserable. Jesus, by the way, speaks more often of hell and of the dangers of being condemned to hell than any other biblical figure. He makes it plain that he will be the one who decides each person's eternal destiny. If we take his teachings seriously, we need to take this aspect seriously as well.

The concluding chapters of The Revelation speak of what comes after the end of the world. Scripture tells us that the entire creation is renewed; there is a "new heavens and a new earth." When the earth was first created, God formed the Garden of Eden. When the earth is recreated, God brings in a city, the "New Jerusalem." This signifies the unity of redeemed humanity. The new city is a blessed and beautiful place, filled with life-giving trees and a wonderful river. The city is filled with light — but there is no sun. The light that fills the new city and the new earth is the light of the world, Jesus himself.

What makes heaven heavenly is the presence of Jesus Christ, the love of the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes the popular pictures

of heaven amount to a "celestial Disney World." Heaven is thought of as a place where there are many enjoyable things to do and where one gets to be with the people one has enjoyed in this life. While I think that this is true as far as it goes, the real delight of heaven is being with God. One of the pictures used in The Revelation is of a great wedding feast between Christ and his Bride, the Church. If you have been around newlyweds, you know that (when they have a healthy relationship and truly love each other) they simply want to be in each other's presence. Great food and interesting activities are nice — but the real essence is being with one another.

The heart of heaven is that we are with the God who made us and who, when we had fallen away in rebellion, redeemed us at great cost. The heart of heaven is knowing and enjoying the Lord. What distresses me about many of the common ideas about heaven is that it makes God into a gatekeeper of an eternal amusement park. He is somebody who must be gotten past in order to enjoy the delights of paradise. The question then

becomes "how do I get my ticket into this place of bliss?" The usual answer is that if one is good enough, one may enter. It is this idea that led the editorialists of the *T & G* to say that God will allow people of many different faiths into heaven, for anyone who is basically decent and helpful will have earned their ticket into a celestial place of delights. Once past God as the gatekeeper, one need no longer deal with him, but rather enjoy the everlasting fish fry.

But the Bible says that the heart of heaven and of heaven's joy is that we are with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. There are many beautiful and enjoyable things in heaven, but they pale into insignificance beside being with the one who made us and who redeemed us. If what the Bible says is true, then the only people who will enjoy heaven will be those who love and trust the holy Trinity. God is not the gatekeeper to heaven — he IS heaven.

That is why it is important to cultivate a relationship with God in this life. While we will never love God perfectly in this life, we will tune our hearts to enjoy him more fully as we worship, pray,

read Scripture, and seek to serve others in his Name and for his sake. As we grow closer to the Lord, we will reveal his presence by developing the fruit of the spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, and so on) and we will appreciate ever more fully the mercy of God in forgiving us and giving us life eternal.

What about those of other faiths? That is a huge question, and one I cannot deal with properly here. We do know that God is a God of mercy. We also know that the God of mercy has given us a commission: "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."

The reason we need mercy is that we are sinners, in rebellion against the God who created us. In Jesus, God has extended an offer of grace, so that if we repent of our rebellion and return to him in trust, we are forgiven and enter into friendship with God. Those who remain in rebellion will get what they want — separation from God. They will also discover that such separation is agonizing. The hellishness of hell is not the flames, but the loss of

God, for whom we were created and apart from whom we have nothing. God is a God of mercy. In his mercy, he sent Jesus. In his mercy, he sends us to invite people to know his Son.

The Green Pastures portrays heaven as an everlasting fish fry on a delightful summer day. There is some truth to this picture — whatever brings us joy on earth is a taste of the joy of heaven. Will there be harps and halos? I do not know — but there will certainly be music and light in abundance. The pictures we have of heaven may be helpful to some extent, but they are helpful only as far as they point beyond themselves to the real joy of heaven, God himself. In 1 John 4:8, we read, "God is love." And in John 17:3, Jesus says, "This is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent." The joy of heaven is the delight of knowing and being known by the one who is Love itself. Heaven is heavenly because God is there.

What does your heart long for?

— The Rev. Charles Sutton,
Trinity, Whitinsville,
Massachusetts

These Transfigured Loaves

O Jesus,
your body for us:
taken, blessed, broken, and given.

We, O Lord, are yours.
Come, O Come we sing:
the light that transfigures us,
turns us into bread for your world.

It returns to you not empty, but
fills hungry mouths with insatiable
strength.

We too, O Lord, are loaves taken, blessed,
broken, and given to the world.
We lay our sacrifice upon your altar
and all creation rejoices with you.
For we are bread.

— By Chad Krouse, Seminarian,
The School of Theology, Sewanee, Tennessee



HILLSPEAKING

HIS PAST spring I moved back to the Farm House to live with my older daughter and her husband. Patient Wife and I had lived there for thirteen years. The move started me musing about the buildings in the Morningside of Hillspeak.

There are eight: the Twin Barns, the Calf Barn, Miss Vinnie's cottage, the Old Residence, the gazebo, the Farm House, the tractor Shed and the Workshop. With the exception of the Twin Barns and the tractor shed and workshop, which is a guesstimate, we do not know how old they are.

The Big Red Barn, the focal point of Hillspeak, was built in 1923 at a cost of \$3200. The most recent re-roofing cost \$10,000! In the mid-90s we added a second story to the Apocrypha to provide more work and storage space (Operation Pass Along has since expanded into the ground floor). The Big Red Barn is built on a hill so there are many structures in the (yards) so that the east side with its ground level basement is four stories high. The third level on the east side houses the Howard Lane

Foland Library. The upper level of the addition houses the accounting office and TAD's Managing Editor's office.

We know that the Old Residence is the oldest building on the property but we don't know how old it is. It started as a two-room, two-chimney dogtrot cabin. It was remodeled and added on at least twice. A corner of the original structure now in the dining area, shows that the logs were shaped in a pattern common just before and just after the Civil War. A photo taken in 1914 shows it looking much like it does today. Today it is occupied by Fr John Burton, TAD's Managing Editor, and his wife Gloria.

The Farm House next door is shown in the photo referred to above and we believe it was probably built around 1900. It, too, has been remodeled and added on to a time or two. When Patient Wife and I moved there from the Old Residence in 1991 we had the chimney that served the kitchen stove removed to provide pantry space.

Miss Vinnie's Cottage has a dubious history. It may have been a seed house and root cellar or it may have been a tornado shelter. In all likelihood it was both.

The Gazebo between the Old Residence and the Farm House is of more recent origin, probably in the late 1920s or early 1930s. It is built over an old cistern and boasts a new metal roof as of this year.

The Calf Barn, which now houses two sets of guest quarters, was probably built about the same time as the Big Red Barn. In recent years it has been remodeled extensively to provide picturesque and quite comfortable living spaces.

The Tractor Shed and the Workshop, between the Farm House and St Mark's Cemetery, were built in the 1960s from material salvaged from chicken houses. They too sport shiny red metal roofs.

If you'd like a closer look at these old buildings come visit. If you'd like to stay overnight call ahead to see what is available. Most people who stay overnight comment on how quiet and peaceful it is here. Come see for yourself.

—The Trustees' Warden



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DEATHS



THE REV. MARTIN BELL, 71, in St. Ignace, Michigan. Fr. Bell was a private investigator, Episcopal priest, author, and musician. He worked for the Pinkerton Detective Agency before becoming a priest. He graduated from the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts and was ordained in 1964. In 1970, he authored *The Way of the Wolf* published by the Seabury Press. In 1977, he founded a mission in Indiana to provide investigative services to those who can't afford private detectives. He served at St. Francis of Assisi in Indian Springs Village, Alabama from 1989 to 1995. While serving as chaplain to the University of Michigan, he founded Canterbury House there. He also served parishes in Indiana, Oklahoma, and Michigan.

THE REV. DAVID R. CARTER, 55, in Williamstown, Massachusetts. He began his theological education with the French Order of Jesuits in Montreal but left the Jesuits in 1948. He later graduated from the General Theological Seminary in New York City and was ordained in

1961. In 1963, he was called as Rector at Grace Church in Scottsville, New York. From 1970 to 1972, Fr. Carter served at St. Mark's in New Milford, Pennsylvania. He also served as Episcopal chaplain in Churchtown. In 1975, he became Rector of Emmanuel Church in Norwich, New York. He served there until his retirement in 1987. In 1989, after serving as a supply priest at several area churches, he became Vicar of St. Andrew's Chapel in North Adams, Massachusetts and served there for 14 years.

✠ **THE REV. DONALD E. CASTLE**, 60, in Elmhurst, Illinois. Father Castle graduated from Nashotah House and was ordained in the early 1970s and served as rector of Calvary Church in Lombard, Illinois for 30 years. He was chaplain to a Chicago suburb's fire department for 15 years. He also served as associate pastor at a church in Park Ridge before coming to Calvary.

✠ **THE REV. RICHARD ENGESETH**, 78, in Reno, Nevada. A graduate of Church Divinity School of the Pacific, he was ordained in 1958.

He served parishes in California and Nevada and was involved with grief recovery and caregiver support in recent years.

✠ **THE REV. CRAIG FICKLING, JR.**, 71, in Staunton, Virginia. He graduated from the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee, and was ordained in 1976. He served parishes in Mississippi, Alabama, and Virginia before retiring in 2002.

✠ **THE REV. NORMAN P. FORDE**, 84, in Williamsburg, Virginia. A graduate of Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago and Philadelphia Divinity School, Fr. Forde served as a Lutheran pastor from 1952 to 1959 when he was ordained a priest in the Episcopal Church. He served parishes in Maryland before becoming a chaplain in the U.S. Army from 1967 to 1982.

✠ **THE REV. TERENCE E. KEEFE**, 75, in Sterling, Colorado. A graduate of Berkeley Divinity School, he was ordained a deacon in 1959 and priest in 1960. He served parishes in Nebraska before founding All Saints', Sterling, Colorado, in 1972. He retired from there as priest in 2001. He also served as chaplain at Sterling Regional Medical Center.

✠ **THE REV. JAMES MARSHALL LILLY**, 87, in Mobile, Alabama. A veteran of WWII, he was a pilot and POW. He graduated from the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee, and was ordained in 1962. He served at Grace Church in Cullman, Alabama, as vicar of St. Matthias in Tuscaloosa, and as rector of Trinity in Florence where he retired in 1984. In retirement, Fr. Lilly assisted at St. Matthias in Whittier, California and Trinity in Bloomington, Indiana.

✠ **THE REV. HERMAN JOHN POMY**, 84, in Nashville, Tennessee. Raised in the Roman Catholic Church, he joined the Anglican Church while serving in the RCAF during WWII. He was ordained in 1979, serving initially as a non-stipendiary priest under the Rev. Charles Murphy at St. Bartholomew's. He started St. Patrick's, a mission church in Smithville, before coming to Church of the Resurrection in Nashville, as curate. He also served as Interim Rector for St. Matthias and Church of the Advent. He was a Spiritual Director for the Tennessee Episcopal Cursillo for six years and served as Spiritual Leader for eight Cursillo teams.

THE REV. WILLIAM SENTER III, 83, in Jackson, Mississippi. A graduate of Bexley Hall Divinity School, he was ordained a deacon in 1961 and priest in 1962. He served parishes in Tennessee and Mississippi until retiring in 2000. He also had an active role in youth ministry in the Diocese of Tennessee.

THE REV. BONNIE SHULLENBERGER, 60, in New Orleans, Louisiana. A graduate of General Theological Seminary, she was ordained a deacon in 1994 and priest in 1995 in the Diocese of East Ankole in the Church of Uganda. She served as assistant chaplain at Mulago Hospital in Kampala and served as supply or interim priest in the Diocese of New York. She also served in Newfoundland and as visiting chaplain at the English Church in Heidelberg, Germany. She published two books: a spiritual autobiography entitled *A Time to Be Born*, and, with her husband William, *Africa Time: Two Scholars' Seasons in Uganda*.

THE REV. JOHN WHITON SIMONS, 78, in Pittsboro, North Carolina. He graduated from Bexley Hall, Kenyon College in Gambier, and was ordained a

priest in 1959. He served at St. Philip the Apostle in Cleveland, Grace Church in Willoughby, Ohio, Trinity in Columbus, and Pershore Abbey in Pershore, Worcester, England. In 1986, Fr. Simons was appointed Ohio National Guard State Senior Chaplain where he served until his retirement in 1991. After retiring from active ministry and the National Guard, he moved to Pittsboro in 1992 where he was told by the bishop that he wasn't old enough to retire. He then served St. John's in Henderson for nine years and St. Bartholomew's in Pittsboro until his death.

✠ **THE REV. DR. MARY M. TAYLOR**, 79, in Newtown Square, Pennsylvania. A 1949 graduate of Bryn Mawr College, she received her doctorate in microbiology there in 1964 and her master of divinity from the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia in 1987. She was ordained in 1988. She served as vicar at All Saints, Fallsington, and later at St. Mary's in Chester.



*Rest eternal, grant unto them O Lord,
and let light perpetual shine upon them.*



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Gifts for the People

What was once referred to on the Church's calendar as Trinity-tide, that is, the long green season that followed Trinity Sunday and led us to Advent, is now simply called the Pentecost season. It was on the Day of Pentecost that the disciples received a special gift from God, the gift Christ had promised before his ascension into heaven. It was the gift of the Holy Ghost; a gift that not only overwhelmed the disciples who received it, but brought shock and awe to those multi-national pilgrims in Jerusalem who witnessed its arrival in dramatic fashion. "When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, the Spirit descended upon them, in cloven tongues like as of fire."

This divine display of such miraculous proportions attracted the multitude and gave Peter and the other Apostles an opportunity to preach, to convert, and to baptize 5,000 souls. From this time forward, the church grew spiritually and numerically, spreading over the known earth. Thus the Day of Pentecost is rightly referred to as the "birth-day" of the Church.

The gift of the Holy Ghost was a multifaceted gift — one that included various gifts. The prophet Isaiah mentions them in his oracle concerning the "root of Jesse" that God promised to send to his people. This One, whom God will send, will possess these gifts of God's Spirit (Is. 11:2,3), which will include the spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge and fear of the Lord. The Septuagint also added piety or godliness.

These are the seven-fold gifts of the Holy Spirit referred to in the Order of Confirmation in the 1928 BCP; the gifts that empowered the Apostles to go out from Jerusalem and grow the Church. These are the same gifts that enable us as individual Christians to grow spiritually and in our service to God. Let's take another look at them.

Wisdom aids us in our search for God. Understanding leads us to the knowledge of truth. Counsel helps us to discern the right path. Godly strength confirms us in doing right. Knowledge teaches us the will of God. Piety or true godliness helps us to lead godly lives. Holy,

ear aids us in serving God. In the 1928 BCP service, the bishop prayed that those about to be confirmed might receive the seven-fold gifts of the Holy Spirit and that they might increase daily as gifts of grace for that is exactly what they are: "gifts of grace."

Let us give thanks for all of God's gifts, especially the gift of faith and grace. And let us be mindful of the gift of the Holy Spirit that enables us to love and serve the Lord. We may not possess all of these gifts as individuals but I am persuaded we do so collectively as the Body of Christ and have been given these gifts for the same purpose as that of the Apostles — to go into all of the world, at least our little corner of it, and grow the church by making disciples, teaching them to observe all that Christ has taught — and to take our baptismal vows seriously by proclaiming his death and resurrection — a witness that continues, I might add, to shock and awe — because it is true. Thanks be to God.

The Rev. Canon Gregg L. Riley,
Grace Church,
Monroe, Louisiana

Prayer

Why do we avoid the joy of prayer? Why don't we pray? Why don't we meet for prayer more often than we do? No doubt lots of reasons will come to mind — busyness, lack of faith, pride, fear.

I know that I have a "natural" resistance to prayer meetings. When they are announced the flesh shrinks back and we think of reasons why we cannot attend, or can only attend for a little while. Organising a prayer meeting seems so hard that we don't even begin. Lethargy sets in. And even when we start, keeping it going is really hard!

I am studying the early chapters of the book of Acts with help from David Peterson's magnificent new commentary. Several things are clear from the account of those early days of the church. The first is that they talked about the Lord Jesus and called on people to be saved. They trusted in God to call people to himself through his word. After all, it is the work of God to take and use his word to call people to himself.

Second, they met together to pray — they had prayer meetings! I suspect that they did not

have to exhort and cajole people to pray. They prayed out of the sheer wonder of the gospel and out of a profound sense of need. They prayed especially for boldness in speaking the word of God.

They prayed that the Holy Spirit would give them such boldness. They prayed because they looked out into their community and saw that so many people needed to come to know Christ.

Third, they demonstrably lived for Christ and for one another. In their case, this meant simply sharing what they had with each other. The marks of that early church were faith in Jesus, love for him, for one another and hope in his return. It was a biblical church and it was a praying church.

I am writing this in the midst of a great prayer meeting. The Chapter House is crowded with people calling on the Lord for our city and our nation. We are not so much praying for our churches, but for the mission field by which we are surrounded.

I can't tell you how much joy there is in the room, for that is the strange fact — we find every excuse possible not to pray and

not to meet for prayer, but when we do, the Lord's presence is manifest and the Lord's people build each other up. More important, we have the Lord's specific promise to hear and respond to our prayers in his name.

Next time we have this opportunity to join together in prayer — say "No" to the evil one who always wishes to frustrate our prayers, and readily join together to call on the name of our great Lord!

— The Rt. Rev. Peter Jensen,
Archbishop of Sydney, Australia

.....

Good Morning

When I say good morning I mean to say:

G-od
O-ffers us his
O-utstanding
D-evotion to

M-ake us
O-bedient &
R-eady for a
N-ew day with him.
I-nspire others, please, and
N-ever forget
G-od loves you!

— Taddled

The Multicultural Nature of the Episcopal Church

The more one reads the Bible, the more one sees that the concept of solidarity with one another (i.e., we are in this together) runs throughout all of Holy Scripture. Almost from the very beginning of Genesis, it was recognized that it was not good for an individual to be alone. The revelation speaks not of individual salvation, per se, but of the destiny of the redeemed people of God collectively embodied in people from "every language and tribe and nation" when the story of redemption will be completed in all its fullness and all its richness. Shared destiny among "the rainbow people of God" runs throughout Holy Scripture.

Historically, this is not how the institutional church has seen itself. Almost from the very beginning, the Jews did not wish to sit in the same pew or go to the same church (to use a modern expression) as their Gentile counterparts and it took the first Council of Jerusalem to decide the issue and to come to some amazing compromises on the admission of Gentile converts into the emerging Christian com-

munity. It was the Apostle Paul who shook these notions of "who were in and who were out" to their very foundation.

Since then, as the Church moved outwards to other lands and embraced other cultures, this subject has engaged the attention of just about every synod and council and convention of the Christian Church. It is not easy to embrace others who are not like you but it is necessary if only to give credence to the belief that we are all children of one God, whether black or white, Asian or Hispanic, male or female, rich or poor, gay or straight, mentally or physically challenged.

Suffice it to say that since the establishment of the Protestant Episcopal Church in these United States, this matter has been a hotly contested and hotly debated issue, giving rise eventually to the founding of the Union of Black Episcopalians and its predecessors for the just inclusion of people of color into the total life of the Episcopal Church. It has not been an easy road to travel and all of you bear the scars of battles fought for the full recognition and affirmation of people of color, and African Americans in

particular, at every level of the Church's structure, the Church's management, and the Church's placement.

In my presentation this evening, I am not going to attempt a historical survey of changing attitudes over the centuries regarding church membership but simply to lay out the fact that bringing people of different national, cultural, and historical backgrounds into full solidarity with one another has always been a challenge for the Christian Church in general and the Episcopal Church in particular. There is a constant tension between "inclusion" and "exclusion" and that tension is very evident in the way we do business in the Episcopal Church.

Other factors are also influential in this process of assimilation: A group's sense of identity and loyalty; racial and ethnic characteristics; history and culture; traditions and institutions; the physical and natural environment; theology and psychology. These factors all contribute in one way or another to forming a church's self consciousness, as it were, and giving church members and parishioners alike their sense of

identity. Given that particular typology and background, it is no wonder that we live in some very challenging times, fraught with grave dangers as well as with great opportunities.

I believe we are living through some fascinating times as the image and concept of Church undergo some radical and fundamental changes. No one is isolated from this process. Political and geographic considerations are thoroughly intertwined in ways that are so complex as to defy comprehension and straightforward explanations. Making this time of change even more uncomfortable for millions of people is the sense that the forces causing change are mostly, though not always, external forces. The familiar sources of comfort and affirmation coupled with loyalty to family, tribe, region, and nation are under constant change and flux.

Let me illustrate what I mean. I come from Guyana (formerly British Guiana), I was educated at the University of the West Indies and Codrington Theological College in Barbados, and at the Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary in Virginia. I have

erved in three different
 Episcopal Dioceses in the United
 States of America — the Diocese
 of Virginia, the Diocese of
 California, and now the Diocese
 of Newark. Today, I consider
 myself a citizen of the world. A
 naturalized U.S. citizen, I am
 often torn in my feelings and per-
 ceptions regarding the impact of
 American foreign policy abroad.
 At the same time, given my first-
 hand experiences from frequent
 travels abroad, there is nowhere I
 would rather be and no other
 country that could command my
 loyalty and my love as these
 United States have. With all its
 shortcomings and disappoint-
 ments, it is still "the last best hope
 of mankind" and its political,
 social, and economic structures,
 though under a great deal of
 stress at the moment, are admired
 by many in the world at large.

I believe that my feelings
 towards our nation could be said
 for many, if not all, of my parish-
 ioners at Christ Episcopal Church
 in the City of East Orange, New
 Jersey. Members of this congrega-
 tion come from several differ-
 ent countries and states across the
 eastern seaboard of the United
 States, the Caribbean, and West
 Africa. These Anglican Christians

come from three distinct geo-
 graphic regions of the world, each
 with his or her own sense of
 "how church should be done."

This is at once a tremendous
 challenge and an enormous
 opportunity made all the more
 remarkable by the fact that the
 next generation of young people
 who accompany their parents
 and grandparents to church are
 now born and raised here in the
 United States. In the course of
 my long ministry in this particu-
 lar parish, I have had to develop
 some important strategies for
 dealing with congregants who
 have come to this country from
 several other countries and conti-
 nents.

To be an effective and faithful
 pastor, I have had to make clear
 that my overarching loyalty is to
 the Gospel and its unambiguous
 call to serve all of God's people.
 In light of this, I determined that I
 could not allow myself to be held
 captive by any one group. It was
 particularly important for me to
 demonstrate this to the Guyanese
 and other West Indians who
 might assume that I would natu-
 rally favor them. I made it quite
 clear in word and in deed that I
 am a pastor for all God's people,

regardless of where they originate, and I will not be obligated to any one particular person, or family, or group, or nationality, because of who I am and where I came from.

Once I established the principle that I could not personally favor one group over another, it was important to institutionalize this concept of equality in other aspects of church life. All committees, groups, and organizations of the parish include individuals representing the three regions of the world from which our parishioners originate so that no one nationality will dominate the proceedings. We have had to be intentional and deliberate about this strategy because, in previous years, conflict among African Americans, West Africans, and West Indians hampered the solidarity of this parish.

Perhaps one of the most positive and well-received initiatives has been to sponsor quarterly "cultural evenings." Over the space of two or three hours, four times a year, church members from a particular nation, Jamaica for example, decorate the parish hall in their national colors with historical artifacts from their homeland.

They make artistic and cultural presentations, share their music and dances, and share their native cuisine with parishioners from other parts of the world in an atmosphere that is pleasant, entertaining, and completely non-competitive and non-threatening.

While these strategies help to mold our diverse congregation into "one people with one destiny," it was rooted in prayer and grounded in a study and reflection upon Holy Scripture in which our Lord's prayer that "all may be one as Jesus and the Father are one" (John 17:22) for "God hath made of one blood all the nations of the earth" (Acts 17:26). We prayed sincerely that this would become a reality in our own parish. I am happy to say at this writing that these words have now become incarnated in our midst as we strive to put our mission statement into effect, "to know Christ and to make him known."

Let me share with all of you a prayer from the Book of Common Prayer that I have found to be of inestimable value in this on-going enterprise:

O God, who created all peoples in
 ur image, we thank you for the
 nderful diversity of races and cul-
 es in this world. Enrich our lives
 ever-widening circles of fellow-
 p, and show us your presence in
 se who differ most from us, until
 knowledge of your love is made
 ffect in our love for all your chil-
 en, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

— The Rev. William A. Guthrie,
 Christ Church,
 East Orange, New Jersey

n in Guyana and educated at Codrington
 ological College (Barbados) and the
 iversity of the West Indies, Dr. Guthrie
 ned a Doctor of Ministry Degree from
 scopal Theological Seminary in Virginia.
 ained in 1973, he served churches in his
 ive Guyana before coming to the United
 tes where he served parishes in Virginia,
 ifornia, and New Jersey. He is the author
Bartica—Gateway to the Interior of Guyana a
 moir about growing up in a nation whose
 to is, "One people, one nation, one des-
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Honor the Giver by Using the Gift

Since I was little my mother cro-
 cheted. I barely remember when
 she crocheted her first afghan.
 She made other things, but most-
 ly she made afghans. As she
 became very skilled, she began
 giving away her creations but
 seldom complied with demands
 for her items. She wasn't con-
 cerned about those who would
 take their business elsewhere.
 These were gifts she made with
 her hands and gave from her
 heart.

After I was grown and seldom
 reconnected with childhood
 friends, mom told me one day
 that she had come across my
 very best childhood friend,
 Mirna. As children, only three
 strands of barbed wire separated
 our yards and by the time we
 were only four and six, we could
 cross those strands in seconds.
 Mirna was beloved by my moth-
 er. At one point she gave Mirna
 one of her crocheted treasures,
 an afghan. As they caught up on
 events over the years, Mirna told
 mother the afghan had begun to
 fall apart from the many years of
 use. It had a hole worn in it, and
 although it had not been put out

of sight, Mirna had insisted her family not use it anymore.

Mom said, "No problem"; the afghan was repairable. When Mirna picked it up after it was repaired, both of them were overjoyed; Mirna, that her "old friend" could now reclaim its place front and center in her family's living room, and my mother saw first hand that her gift was as beloved to the receiver as it was to her.

God gave us the gifts he decided were the right color, size, style, pattern, and shape especially for us. I think God would be pleased to see our talents are being well-used. Made lovingly and specifically for each one of us, God sent each of us a certain set of talents, and gifts of character.

As annoying as it is to Mom to have people demand certain crafts of hers, I feel that it similarly frustrates God when we demand that he bestow upon us gifts that he has given to others. His grand plan is seen only to

him, and certainly from that vantage point, he can see who needs what better than we can.

The gifts that God gives us are as precious as the beloved receiver is to God. Unlike earthly gifts I suspect it is the gifts from God that make part of who we are; the other part is what we do with the gift. Do we place it under the bed, and demand new gifts from God? Do we trust that he knows the larger picture and work with the gift? Recognizing the gift is the first step, loving it and embracing it, and making it part of your family's life are the next steps.

On God's behalf I ask that you recognize and give thanks to him for your gifts. Everyone gets them. Prayer can repair them and help to make their potential fully recognized. The gifts were made lovingly by his hands and given to you from his heart. Amen.

— Jennifer Larimore
Friendswood, Texas

The Folly of Quantifying Love

My local newspaper recently reported that researchers associated with Oxford University would spend \$3.7 million in an

effort to find out why people believe in God. Was it a matter of nature or nurture? Did the development of such a belief

fer some evolutionary benefit developing humanity? To answer these questions the articulated readers that scientists could develop "a scientific approach to why we believe in God and other issues around the nature and origin of religious belief."

Regardless of motive, this test for the absolute doomed itself to failure at the outset by basing itself on a materialist cornerstone. God is spirit and God is love. How does one measure and quantify love?

God is love. This simple three-word declaration found in 1 John encapsulates God's revelation and forms the hinge upon which Christianity is based. God loved the material universe at he took humanity upon himself in Christ. Jesus Christ, as the image of God, poured out his life in the passion. From the depths of eternity, the Holy Trinity radiated love between which — for God is a Communion of Three, a Unity in Plurality, a Threefold I and Thou," as Bishop Kallistos Ware has expressed it.

Through the Spirit and in Christ we are called to join in this everlasting dialogue of love. Our call to belief is a loving response

to the love that is God: We love him, because he first loved us. Our natural reaction is to cry "Abba! Father!" as we become more aware of our adoption as children of God.

Love is shared and procreative. The Spirit continually transforms those who say yes to the love of God. Change, growth, ecstasy — all are constants in Christ. We are continually becoming something new. We instinctively reach out to others with the messages of God's love in a ministry to reconcile shattered creation. Through Liturgy and the Eucharist, we unite ourselves with the Trinity and with each other. In his High Priestly Prayer, Jesus said, "I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you" (John 14:20). We lift our voices in response, joining them with the heavenly chorus of the redeemed: "Who can fail to do you homage, Lord, and sing the praises of your Name?" (Canticle 19). God is love, and human belief in God is a joyful response to this reality. All this is as incomprehensible as it is real, and attempts to examine it under a slide will ultimately fail.

— Daniel J. Wood,
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The Meaning of Crucifixion

For almost two thousand years the image of the Cross has struck its way into the hearts of Jews. For all its horrors, and despite the fact that thousands of Jews had been sacrificed at the hands of the Romans, this fear was not rooted in the history of Roman oppression of the Jews. The hideous truth is that it is rooted in what the followers of a Jew, Jesus of Nazareth, have done in his name to Jews over the centuries.

At Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem, has a photograph that underlines this better than any words or historical data ever could. It is a picture from a small unknown village in Germany in the 1930s. At the edge of the village was a life-sized crucifix that may well have stood there since the Middle Ages. Hanging from the crucifix was a sign that read, "*Hier sind Juden nicht willkommen*" (Jews are not welcome here). The most frightening part of this is that it was written by people who purported to worship Jesus, the Jew whose image was on that cross as a reminder that he died to save them. This was not just the sin of a group of bigots a few decades ago, neither

was it just the sin of a mindless mob. It was the sin of all mankind, and should remind us of how we can distort the truth when we allow ourselves to forget what God has taught us and what he expects of us.

Crucifixion long precedes Roman times, but the Romans honed it to a fine art of unimaginable cruelty. By the time of Jesus it had become the standard method of execution for any criminal who was not a Roman citizen.¹ When Herod the Great died in 4 BCE, there was an uprising in Jerusalem. The Roman prefect Publius Quinctilius Varus² punished the rebels by lining the road from Jerusalem to Caesarea³ with crucified Jews. According to the historian Flavius Josephus, there were over two thousand. Seventy-four years later the general Titus Flavius Vespasianus (later the

¹ This is why Saint Paul was not crucified. He was a Roman citizen, and thus was beheaded instead of being tortured and then crucified.

² This was the same Varus whose arrogance would later cost the lives of two Roman legions (about 12,000 men) in an ambush in the Teutoburg Forest in Germany. Disgraced, he fell on his own sword.

³ Caesarea was the Roman capital of the Province of Syria, the province that contained Judea. Varus copied the example of Marcus Licinius Crassus, who 70 years earlier crucified 6,600 of Spartacus' followers. He lined the Appian Way from Rome to Brundisium with a cross every 200 feet on both sides.

emperor Titus), in reprisal for another rebellion, looted the Temple, leveled the city of Jerusalem, and crucified 500 Jews a day until, according to Josephus, they literally ran out of wood to make crosses. From the time Pompey took Syria in 63 BCE until the Jews were finally expelled from Palestine in 120 CE, a day rarely passed when the Jews could not look in any direction and see a victim hanging on a cross. To the Romans, it was a deterrent to criminals. To the Jews, it fed their hatred for Rome.

While theologically it was the sin of mankind that necessitated the death of Jesus, historically it was as simple as the fact that Pontius Pilate hated the Jews and rarely missed an opportunity to crucify a few. He particularly hated the High Priest Caiaphas and played "cat and mouse" with him by proposing that Jesus, whom Caiaphas hated and feared, should be spared. He did not care whether Jesus, whom he saw as just another Jewish troublemaker, lived or died.⁴

Crucifixion was well-known in Palestine long before the Romans. The Seleucids used it sparingly, but it was so abhorrent to the Jews that it was never adopted as a

means of punishment. However, the Hasmonean tyrant Alexander Jannaeus (104-78 BCE), who hated the Pharisees (it was mutual) and relished every opportunity to insult or humiliate them, used crucifixion in a massacre. At the Feast of Tabernacles in about 100 BCE, a band of Pharisees pelted him with citrons. In a fit of rage he killed six thousand of them. He crucified eight hundred in the middle of Jerusalem and slaughtered their wives and children in front of them as they hung on their crosses. He watched the massacre from the porch of his palace, reclining on a bed of cushions and surrounded by his concubines. The horrified Jews of all sects never forgave this atrocity and the people lost confidence in the dynasty that had originally restored their freedom. It was the beginning of the end of Jewish independence.

Because of the atrocities that the Jews had undergone for 150 years there was no more perfect symbol

⁴ Pilate was eventually recalled to Rome because of his cruelty. Tradition says that he committed suicide there. For the Romans to be concerned about someone's cruelty meant that it must indeed have been extraordinary. The Gospels treat him gently because they were written for a Gentile readership, and there was nothing to be gained by "bad mouthing" him.

an the cross to denote their suffering. It should have served as a token of the identity of Jesus with his people. As a Jew, he suffered death at the hand of their oppressors. Long before Christian Anti-Semitism, however, there were difficulties with the Jews accepting the cross as a token of the Messiah. The Law was clear that anyone who was "hung on a tree" was cursed by God:

If a man guilty of a capital offense is put to death and his body is hung on a tree, you must not leave his body on the tree overnight. Be sure to bury him that same day, because *anyone who is hung on a tree is under God's curse*. You must not desecrate the land the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance. (Deut. 21:22f.).

In several passages in the New Testament, Jesus is referred to as having been hung on a tree:

The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead — whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree (Acts 5:30).

The Christian use has a double meaning. It is a reference to the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden, from which mankind was cut off. The death and resurrection of

Christ restored our access to the Tree of Life by giving us everlasting life through his redemption of us (Rev. 2:7). Paul, however, also used the analogy to the curse of being hung on a tree:

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree." He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit (Gal. 3:13f.).

What he is saying is that as we were cursed by virtue of our sin (allegorized as mankind's expulsion from Eden), Christ took that curse from us by taking it upon himself for us by being crucified ("hung on a tree"). Allegorically, then, our access to the Tree of Life was restored.

To Christians, this makes solid theological sense. To the Jews, however, the deeply rooted tradition of the curse of being hung on a tree was a stumbling block. Even the worst criminals, if they were hung on a tree, would be taken down and buried before sundown. It was not for the sake of the criminals, but to keep from

defiling the land that God had given them (Deut. 21:23 above). This meant so much to the Jews that the Romans, to avoid trouble, allowed the bodies of the crucified to be removed from the crosses before sundown on any Sabbath (John 19:31). They might leave bodies on the cross for days, but allowed the Jews to remove them before a Sabbath.⁵

Another stumbling block to the Jews was the type of Messiah most of them were seeking. Some sought a military Messiah, another Judas Maccabeus, who would raise up an army of rebels, expel the Romans, and reestablish Israel's independence.⁶ Others looked for another David, who, with the help of God, would

restore the Davidic throne and bring Israel back to the glory and world influence it knew in the days of David and Solomon's United Monarchy. Neither of these messianic images could tolerate the idea of a Messiah who would die, especially at the hands of foreign oppressors like the Romans, and more especially not in the humiliation and curse of crucifixion. They could accept the idea of a suffering Messiah such as in Isaiah's Suffering Servant (Isa. 53:2) or in the Forsaken One of Psalm 22, but death was not in the mix. This is undoubtedly why Jesus so often told the Twelve how he was to die, but then told them not to tell anyone else until it happened. The people were not yet ready for that concept.

The cross was also a stumbling block for the Gentiles, most of whom were either Greeks or thoroughly immersed in Greek thinking. To the Greeks, death meant being freed from the burden of the flesh, which they thought to be corrupt and evil. To them the idea of resurrection was completely unacceptable — why would anyone want to return to the flesh after being resurrected, after he had finally been freed from the carnal prison? They could accept the idea of death and revivification

⁵ The Romans generally left the bodies on the crosses until they rotted off or were torn down by animals. This was to add to the horror of the punishment, which they saw as a deterrent to other criminals. The Deuteronomic curse meant so much to the Jews, however, that the Romans realized that to violate it would simply cause more trouble than it was worth.

⁶ This may be why Judas betrayed Jesus. His name indicates that he was probably a Zealot, one who looked for a military Messiah. As it became increasingly evident to him that Jesus had no intention of being such and yet people were coming to accept him as the Messiah, Judas may have thought it necessary either to force his hand or get him out of the way so the people would turn to a military leader.

being brought back to life). Their mythology was full of such stories, and the revivification of Osiris in the mythology of Egypt and of Mithra in that of Persia was no problem to them. They also could have had no problem with the raising of Lazarus, because that was also nothing more than revivification. Resurrection, however, the everlasting continuation of life in a mystical perfected body, was nonsense to them (Acts 17:32). It was also rejected by most Jews except the Pharisees, for whom resurrection was a basic religious tenet.

Paul confronted this in his first letter to the Corinthians (1:20ff):

Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolish-

ness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength.

The cross was a symbol of piety to the Jews long before the Christians used it as a religious symbol. Because of decades of unjustified crucifixions by the Romans, crucifixion to the Jews became almost a badge of honor. The idea of the curse of being hanged on a "tree" faded in the light of the idea that if the Romans hated and crucified you, you couldn't be all bad. Rabbi Ishmael wrote in a commentary on Exodus 20:6 ("showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments"), "Why are you being led out to be beheaded? Because I circumcised my son to be an Israelite. Why are you being led out to be burned? Because I read the Torah. Why are you being led out to be crucified? Because I ate the unleavened bread (celebrated Passover)." In the eyes of many, being persecuted for righteousness became in itself an act of righteousness. Along this line of thinking, Jesus as the suffering Messiah would have made perfectly good sense to the Jews. The idea of the death of the Messiah, however, was

still a stumbling block to all except a few of the Pharisees, who could make the connection between resurrection and the overcoming of sin and death.

By the fourth century, the cross had become an important symbol to Christians and was on the verge of becoming Christianity's primary symbol (up to that time it had been the fish). Also, sad to say, the anti-Semitism of many Christians began to blossom. It came into full flower in the Dark and Middle Ages and was at a peak during the Crusades and again during the Inquisition and the Holocaust. It would not begin to be seriously confronted by the Church until modern times. Thus, for centuries, the cross and the word "Christian" have struck fear into the hearts of Jews all over the world. The cross no longer reminded the Jews of the atrocities of the Romans but rather of the atrocities perpetrated by the people who claimed to follow the teachings of a Jew whom they believe to be the Son of God.

When I was in college, Rabbi Weiss of Temple Israel in New York spoke to an open meeting of the Hillel Foundation. He said, "It is true that many Jews are almost paranoid, seeing anti-Semitism

and persecution even where does not exist. But this is understandable when you remember that the Jews have been subjected to two thousand years of Christian love." Many years ago I had the privilege of hearing Joon de Blank, the Archbishop of Capetown, and one of the primary movers in the eventual abolition of Apartheid in South Africa. He told of a parishioner of his who renounced Christianity when he was finally forced to recognize that Jesus was a Jew. Such blind bigotry transcends the pathetic and is truly evil.

The cross should be a constant reminder to us, not only that Christ died and rose again to save us, but that he did so to save all mankind — people of every race, creed and nationality, and not just Christians. After all, Jesus was not a Christian — there was no such thing as a Christian until several years after his death and resurrection. He lived as a faithful Jew and died as one. The cross, therefore, should be the greatest unifying force in history, not the divisive implement into which it is so easy to convert it.

— The Rev. Richard R. Losch
St. James
Livingston, Alabama



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A Farewell Message

Like most of you, I am horrified by the news lately. I cannot understand how a father could murder his wife and children, then commit suicide over nothing more than finances.

I can see that losing investments and employment could hit anyone in the solar plexus. But to despair so greatly that a person decides it would be better to kill his loved ones and himself — no way!

How could it happen? It seems to me that if someone buys completely into society's values and only finds self-worth in accomplishments, bank accounts, houses and other material goods, it might seem there is nothing more to live for when the failing economy takes a nosedive plunge. If I think that who I am is that bank account, those stocks and bonds I own, then see them evaporate as I'm shoved from a spaceship's airlocks into the void of space, then perhaps one would be sad enough to contemplate suicide. Perhaps. Even when a person goes far enough to see suicide as his or her only way out, they succumb to foolish lies and evil delusions. I go the next step and murder

spouse and children seems unimaginable. The spouse and children have done no harm. They had no role in making the stock market tank. They did not cause the abuses of power which led to all this. Why take them out when one takes one's life?

Episcopalians tend to be worldly Christians. We try to straddle the gap between society's values and mores and the teachings of Christ. I'm afraid that all too often we end up buying into societal values at the expense of those of God in Christ.

Do you know what that is called? Loss of faith. Faith involves values, attitudes, and mental/emotional health. Faith involves knowledge, courage, and attitude. Faith separates the foolish worldly-oriented ones from the fools for Christ.

Paul writes, "I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, as though sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to mortals. We are fools for the sake of Christ, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute" 1 Cor. 4:9-10 (NRSV).

Wouldn't it seem foolish to leave home and loved ones to go out on a traveling mission through the known world, to risk one's health and life to proclaim that a certain country rabbi from the outskirts of tiny Judea had voluntarily given himself up as a living sacrifice, to being tortured to death on a cross in order to break the spell of sin and evil, and then rose, ALIVE and whole, from the dead? "Worldly foolish" seems to be what God asks us to emulate and to be.

Over the past thirty years one of the expressions that I have come to abhor is, "I just want to play Devil's advocate here." The Devil needs no advocate, especially not from someone who claims to follow Jesus. Whether you believe in an actual entity with horrid appearance called "Satan" or "the Devil," or you believe that there is something awry with the world, to argue a negative response to a faithful idea or plan flies in the face of Christian discipleship.

What better thing, what more pleasing thing to Christ Jesus, could there be than to embrace and indeed embody Jesus' attitude, action, and teaching? Rejecting societal assumptions, we Christians chose to cling to

hope. There is Someone larger than the pet values of worldly prominence and worldly wisdom. There is Someone who is the Maker of heaven and earth. We see his face in the face of Jesus of Nazareth. In him we find hope. When we place our trust in him, forswearing the vows we have made at the altar of worldly success, we find true victory and everlasting satisfaction.

I hope I haven't rambled too much and too far afield, for I have a message which I believe is from the Lord: Don't buy into the pessimistic and the cynical views of the ordinary world, but seek the hope and vision of God's world in his invisible realm which breaks into our lives from time to time even if we spend most of our time vainly attempting to satisfy the false values of our society.

Choose to believe that God is God. Choose to believe that God triumphs. Choose to believe that even though God does not force himself upon us, overwhelming our free will that he is active in the world. Choose to believe that God answers prayers. Choose to seek to understand how God answers prayers. Choose to seek the One Jesus, the Messiah of God, who would do.

have come this far with you, beyond what I had imagined I could do. I kept serving as your priest and rector for five years past ordinary retirement time. Why? Because to me God's extraordinary love for St. John's Church has been revealed, manifested, time after time through these nine years I have been privileged to serve you.

Many of you have begun to see your life outside St. John's walls doing things for Christ, even in the midst of the workplace. That is what Member Mission is all about.

Member Mission is not a program, per se, but a way of living. We become more and more aware of our needs around us and do what we can to help others trapped in circumstances not of their own choosing. When we recycle and do our best at conserving natural resources, we are engaged in God's mission. When we see someone whose face shows signs of grief and/or pain and make even a small gesture of care to them, say a smile, we are doing God's mission.

St. John's history is filled with the tales of faithful Christians loving God and serving neighbors. We continue to show this

forth, though our numbers be dwindled from our heyday. Surprise! Almost every denominational church has experienced the same thing.

I pray that you will be a healthy, God-loving, God-revealing assembly of the Living Lord. Though I can no longer try to lead you into the glorious future of Christian service, Christian witness, and Christian worship which the Lord says he has in store for you, I will, God willing, continue to support you behind the scenes. I will continue to plead your cause to the Almighty. I will, with God's help, do whatever I can do without violating the guidelines our bishop and his predecessors have set out for us. I will continue to hold you dearly in my heart.

*In the Love of Jesus, the Christ,
in the power of the Spirit,
the Sanctifier and peace maker,
and with all the saints who
have ever assembled with other
faithful and godly believers
in Christ's name,
My prayers are with you.*

—The Rev. John H. Elledge,
St. John's,
Havre de Grace, Maryland

Contents

Baptism Before Communion	4
New Life in Christ	6
Children - Our Inheritance	7
Life and Death	9
First Work	11
Time Management for Mission	13
From the Editor	14
Becoming Missional	19
I Loved You First	20
The Anxious Heart	22
A Chaplain for Tangier	25
The Church and Mission of Christ	27
Why Is Heaven Heavenly?	29
Hillspeaking	35
Gifts for the People	42
Prayer	43
Multicultural Nature of the Church	45
Honor the Giver	49
Folly of Quantifying Love	50
The Meaning of the Crucifixion	53
A Farewell Message	61